

## Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



*Together, We Can Make  
A Difference*

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High School**  
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### Jets Expand Recycling Program

#### The Member

Cumberland County High School in Crossville, Tennessee, has well over 1000 students. Environmental Science students have been busy this year when it comes to working for the environment! With the addition of a new high school in Cumberland County, and the former TP3 contact teacher moving to the new school, the Green School Program at CCHS needed a new leader. Staci Smith and her Environmental Science classes (roughly 120 students per year), along with the new principal Janet C. Graham, stepped up and took charge.

#### The Story

CCHS expanded the recycling program this year. We have always recycled cardboard and paper through a private company. This year, we added plastic drink bottles as well as aluminum cans, which are transported to the county recycling center.

When students realized just how much plastic was being tossed into classroom trash cans everyday, they knew a change was needed. Mrs. Smith went to the county for help. She asked for a new recycling bin for the school that would enable recycling more than just paper. With budget cuts and other problems at hand, the need for a new bin was placed on the county's back burner temporarily.

Mrs. Smith, along with Principal Janet C. Graham, decided they could still make this work! They began by advertising the new recycling opportunities throughout the school. Next, they moved all the large trashcans out of the classrooms in the building and replaced them with much smaller cans. The effect was that the teachers had to stress the need to recycle drink containers and paper, or the trash bins would overflow! Environmental Science students collected all drink containers throughout the building weekly, brought them to the science lab, and emptied all remaining liquids into the sink. This was a dirty job, but one that must be done! The students were ready and willing to take it on. Finally, the custodians pitched in and hauled the bags of bottles and cans to the Cumberland County Recycling Center every Tuesday morning.



Environmental Science students empty liquids from drink bottles in preparation for recycling.

#### The Success

Expanding the recycling program improved operations at CCHS. Another project was creating environmental awareness newsletters that are read to the advisory classes monthly. These letters have included topics such as carpooling, water and energy-saving techniques, recycling and much more! We also wrote letters to teachers about managing thermostats, and turning off lights and computers. This year we began awarding prizes for the most computer ink cartridges brought in for recycling. Next year we will add old cell phones to our program. The list of new ventures goes on...

#### The Pollution Prevented

Environmental Science students are very proud of the difference our recycling expansion is making in the amount of trash going to the landfill. The total amount of drink containers recycled is as high as 10 50-gallon bags each week!

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